

Proposal Title	Support to independent media and journalists in Ukraine
Reserve Fund	Eurasia Regional Reserve Funds
Collaborating Programs	International Renaissance Foundation, Program on Independent Journalism
Recommended by	Marie Teresa Ronderos, PIJ Director and Yevhen Bystrytsky, IRF Director
Coordinated by	Stewart Chisholm and Marie Struthers, PIJ staff Stanislav Lyachynskyy, IRF
Approver	Leonard Benardo, Regional Director
Date Approved	
Amount Requested	\$274,787
Unforeseen Need (250 words)	<p>Independent media and journalists in Ukraine have faced state-level repression and intimidation long before the dramatic events on the Maidan unfolded in February 2014. Over the past several months, however, Russia's aggression and domestic political transition have taken a toll on Ukraine's independent media. In response to these events, many donors are considering supporting large-scale initiatives, including transforming the state broadcaster into a public service channel, and establishing an independent regional Russian-language satellite. Through this project, PIJ and IRF propose to meet four immediate shorter-term objectives to shore up independent media and journalists:</p> <p>Safety and protection of journalists, particularly those reporting on and originally from eastern Ukraine and Crimea. In addition to the provision of safety training, a cadre of Ukrainian trainers -- who can continue to support training, counseling and advice on trauma and security -- should be developed.</p> <p>Employment counseling, training and job placement is urgent for the journalists already displaced to Kyiv from eastern Ukraine and Crimea. According to an International Media Trade Union estimate, there are over 100 such journalists in Kyiv. Several regional newspapers and independent broadcasters are also facing closure. At the same time, some Kyiv-based media and regional broadcasters are sorely in need of expert journalists. Recently, some of Kyiv's best journalists were elected to parliament, and</p>

	<p>there are not enough good local correspondents outside the capital. A central goal of this project will be to match displaced journalists' employment needs with those of such outlets, and to shore up the capacities of media in the conflict zones, through employment-support and fellowship schemes.</p> <p>Countering propaganda, supporting watchdog efforts and evidence-based reporting: not only is Russian propaganda a problem, but so is the increase in biased coverage in the Ukrainian-language media, especially due to news "black-outs" and the distortion of information coming from eastern Ukraine.</p> <p>Providing the basis for media-policy reform, including the licensing of new TV stations, requires an audit of the National Council of TV & Radio Broadcasting's current procedures and the preparation of a blueprint for further reform. Otherwise, comprehensive, longer-term reform efforts are unlikely to develop effectively.</p>
<p>Activities Proposed (500 words)</p>	<p>To meet the 4 above objectives, four sub-projects are proposed totaling close to \$500,000 for a one-year period (to be funded by PIJ and the EP regional funds). A mix of grants and operational support will be required.</p> <p>1. A grant to the Journalists' Crisis Center: JCC is a joint endeavour between the National Union of Journalists of Ukraine and the Independent Media Trade Union. This umbrella organization provides safety advice and training, as well as psychological trauma counselling for journalists. PIJ has worked with the Crisis Center to develop a proposal covering five main activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) funding for two representatives (one from each of the unions) to provide ongoing safety advice to journalists, and oversee and organize the development of safety training courses; (b) supporting a psychologist to provide trauma counselling for journalists; (c) conducting two safety trainings for journalists from conflict zones and one "Training of Trainers" to build up a cadre of local experts (in conjunction with the International Federation of Journalists); (d) providing a small quantity of physical protection

gear for journalists working in the conflict zones (to be held by the Center and lent to journalists for temporary use);

(e) maintaining a “safety fund” of \$30,000 to respond to immediate journalists’ safety needs.

In addition, a consultant will be funded to assist the JCC administer the grant as the JCC’s own organizational capacity to manage and administer grants requires strengthening. JCC staff are primarily activists who are excellent at operational tasks, but have little time and experience with administration. This extra help will also lift a burden off JCC members who are already overstretched.

Total projected costs: \$100,259

2. Increasing employment opportunities for journalists from eastern and southern Ukraine:

(a) **Eastern Fellowships for Journalists** to help journalists from eastern and southern Ukraine develop contacts and work-ties with media in various parts of Ukraine. This initiative will be developed and implemented together with Internews Ukraine, in partnership with the Independent Association of Broadcasters, the Association of Regional Publishers, the journalists’ trade unions, and key media partners such as *Hromadske* and *Spilno* TVB. We hope to provide 25 six-month fellowships (including training and travel stipends, where needed), as well as support for a full-time officer to administer the fellowship project at Internews-Ukraine, a project partner. The fellowships will support journalists who have already been displaced to access employment opportunities, but they could also be provided to journalists who have remained in conflict areas where the media are not able to provide salaries due the political and economic conditions.

Expected support: \$150,436 (mainly a grant to Internews-Ukraine)

(b) **Support for the generation of independent content from Crimea and eastern Ukraine.** There is an information gap both in these regions and throughout the country given the hazardous work conditions and the exodus of journalists. Overall, quality local journalism throughout Ukraine’s regions has dwindled in the past year due to unstable political

conditions and a weakened economy. For example, 50 percent of local television stations ceased to operate in 2013-2014, and there is no good quality local radio in Donetsk. The information gap in eastern Ukraine is only exacerbated by these factors. We propose therefore to bolster content production by journalists and activists who continue to work in these areas, and support new journalism initiatives. We envision that media content will be produced for both the national level media, to provide them with reliable information from the conflict-stricken regions, but also for local level media with the purposes of dissemination in eastern and southern Ukraine. Possible recipients of support are "*Krym-Realiyi*" (www.krymr.org); Oleksiy Matsuka of *Hromadske* TV-Donetsk; Serhiy Garmash of Ostrov webzine (www.ostro.org), also based in the Donetsk region; and the group "IT Sector Kharkiv." We will also launch a call for proposals during which we expect other initiatives to appear.

Expected support: \$150,000 (4-5 subgrants)

3. Support to Stop Fake (<http://www.stopfake.org>).

Stop Fake is a Ukrainian-led grassroots volunteer media monitoring and fact-checking initiative aimed and highlighting examples of "propaganda" in Russian and Ukrainian media. Run by several media and communications specialists from the Kyiv-Mohyla School of Journalism and the Digital Future Journalism project, the website has become increasingly popular among "citizen journalists" who provide much of the content. Stop Fake staff have requested support for institutional development. On a volunteer basis they are unable to carry out the work consistently and to standard; they have also requested capacity-building support to better fact-check submissions from citizen journalists. This support will also strengthen Ukraine's Stop Fake's ability to become part of the global movement of fact-checkers and develop partnerships with other groups internationally. Several Stop Fake team members took part in the Global Fact-Checking Summit in London in June; however, PIJ will link it up with other fact-checking partners, such as Politifact

(US), Full Fact (UK), Africa Check and Chequeado (Argentina), as well as programs which can assist in the verification of material (photos, video) submitted by citizen journalists such as [Storyful](#), [Story Maker](#) and [Source Fabric](#). PIJ will also liaise with potential Russian partners, who could assist with media monitoring efforts in Russia, such as SOVA. PIJ will support a workshop between Ukrainian and Russian fact checkers and participation of Ukrainians in global fact-checking networking events. We expect that introducing fact-checking standards into the Ukrainian media will lead to an improvement in the overall quality of Ukrainian journalism and help counteract propaganda. **Expected support: \$50,000 (25k grant to Stop Fake and the rest to finance networking opportunities)**

4. Support reform of the National Council of TV and Radio Broadcasting (NCTVRB). NCTVRB is the main body overseeing the licensing, functioning and performance of the media in Ukraine. Under the Yanukovych regime it was known for making many arbitrary, politically motivated and non-transparent decisions. New representatives have now been appointed. The council should define new procedures for issuing or prolonging licenses, giving itself limited monitoring functions, and ensuring appropriate public oversight. It should also move ahead on facilitating the digital switchover. Members of the NCTVRB's civic Expert Board have requested this assessment. We see this as a new opportunity to contribute to reforming the media regulator, which has been identified as a priority by a group of media professionals (some recently elected as MPs) and independent media watchdogs that are part of the Expert Board.

The Council of Europe will support the developments of the NCTVRB's strategy and action plan. Given PIJ's expertise, we offer to provide international experts to conduct an audit of the National Council procedures, conduct stakeholder interviews to determine its "weak" areas, and make recommendations for improvements and necessary capacity building. This rapid and early intervention will provide an indispensable basis for the more long term NCTVRB strategy development and

	<p>capacity-building, which will seek to improve the transparency of the NCTVRB procedures, and help develop a nation-wide licensing plan (including procedures for implementing the digital switch-over).</p> <p>Expected contribution: \$50,160 (Grant to Independent Association of Broadcasters to carry out audit with international experts)</p>
Statement of who within OSF would lead the work	<p>This program will be implemented jointly by PIJ and IRF. PIJ will provide its expertise and those of key international partners. Funding will be delivered through a budget allocation to the IRF. IRF will manage the project locally.</p>
Contributions expected from various units within OSF and essential partners or grantees (250 words)	<p>The entire project will cost \$499,848. PIJ will contribute \$225,000 from its 2014 budget (which includes \$70,000 from the PIJ director's fund):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$75,000 to the Crisis Center for Ukrainian journalists \$100,000 to the Employment Programs for Ukrainian journalists \$25,000 to the "Stop Fake" initiative \$25,000 to the audit for the NCTVRB <p>PIJ and IRF therefore seek \$274,787 (see full detailed budget attached) in co-funding from the Eurasia Program Reserve Fund, to be delivered as a budget allocation to IRF. IRF will provide sub-grants to the partners indentified in the application, and provide ongoing assessment and monitoring of the projects activities, accountancy and reporting.</p> <p>Given that IRF does not have a Media Program at present, we also request that administrative support be provided to IRF to cover administrative expenses related to program management, accounting, IT and communications. IRF estimates that \$46,804 will be needed for administration costs in total out of which \$26,345 is being requested from the Eurasia regional fund (the remainder will be paid for by PIJ)</p> <p>The project will also be implemented in close cooperation with international partners including the International and European Federations of Journalists (on safety and protection), the Internews Network, SOVA Media Monitoring Agency (Russia) and several Ukrainian broadcasters and publishers' associations.</p>

	<p>Finally, we will collaborate with key donors in this field such as USAID, the Canadian Embassy in Ukraine, the Council of Europe and others, to seek co-funding where appropriate for various aspects of this work going forward. We expect the local content providers (especially <i>Hromadske</i>.TV and its local branches) to become gradually less dependent on donor funding.</p> <p>IRF's Financial Department and Grant Management Department will manage the grants according to IRF/OSF procedures. The financials will be done by the IRF Financial Department. Evaluation of the initiative will be performed by Inna Pidluska, IRF Deputy Executive Director; an external evaluation may be carried out at the end of the initiative.</p> <p>The project will be implemented from 1 January – 31 December, 2015.</p>
--	---